

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Heights

App Ref: 221891/HOU

Address: 23 Conisboro Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JB

Proposals: First floor extension above existing bungalow. Single storey porch extension.

Case Officer: Marcie Rejwerska

Applicant: Mr & Mrs A. McDowell

Date received (valid from): 3 January 2023 **Target Decision date:** 21 March 2023 (ext.)

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a detached bungalow on the west side of Conisboro Avenue. The property is set back from the road and largely obscured from view due to large mature trees. The property has a double garage at the side which is attached to the host dwelling, as well as an existing conservatory at the rear. Conisboro Avenue is a residential road characterised by detached and semi-detached dwellings, with a mix of two-storey and bungalow properties on the west side. The property is not listed nor in a conservation area. There are a number of TPO trees at the front and rear of the property.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought for a porch extension and first floor extension above the existing pitched roof.

The proposed porch extension will measure 2.02m in depth x 3.14m in width. The proposed new roof of the first floor extension will slope down to include the porch.

The proposed first floor extension creates an additional ~78m² floor space. The extension will have a hipped roof with a front gable and dormer which are proposed to have timber cladding. At the rear, the first floor design will include two gables and one gable dormer. The height of the proposed new roof will be a total of 7.14m, a 1.67m increase from the existing pitched roof.

Plans considered:

- 3824/200, Block and location plan, dated December 2021, received 19 December 2022
- 3824/101, Existing ground floor plan, dated December 2021, received 3 January 2023
- 3824/102, Existing roof plan, dated December 2021, received 3 January 2023
- 3824/103, Existing elevations (NE + SW), dated December 2021, received 3 January 2023
- 3824/104, Existing elevations (SE + NW), dated December 2021, received 3 January 2023
- 1165 Sheet 2, Topographical survey, dated September 2021, received 19 December 2022
- 3824/201 Rev. A, Proposed ground floor plan, dated December 2021, received 19 December 2022
- 3824/202, Proposed first floor plan, dated December 2021, received 19 December 2022
- 3824/203, Proposed roof plan, dated December 2021, received 19 December 2022
- 3824/204 Rev. A, Proposed elevations (NE + SE), dated December 2021, received 19 December 2022
- 3824/205 Rev. A, Proposed elevations (SW + NW), dated December 2021, received 19 December 2022

- R3057/b, Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment, John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, dated April 2022, received 20 January 2023
- R3262/a, Bat Emergence Survey, John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, dated October 2022, received 19 December 2022
- 3824/206, Tree protection plan, dated December 2021, received 7 March 2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

890173 - Change of use of utility room for part time treatment of chiropody patients - Application permitted on 16/3/1989

920866 - Change of use of utility room for part-time treatment of Chiropody patients. (Renewal of planning permission 89/113/FD) - Application permitted on 5/3/1992

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal consultations:

Ecology - The application site comprises a bungalow that may have features potentially suitable for roosting bats. It is proposed to extend the house by adding a first floor extension above the existing bungalow. The proposed works would affect large areas of the existing roof.

The site is surrounded by habitat of high suitability for foraging and commuting bats including houses with large gardens with lines of trees. The site is also adjacent to a designated green link as per policy EN12 and forms part of a block of rear gardens which together are of importance for biodiversity.

The Bat survey reports (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, April and October 2022,) have been undertaken to an appropriate standard and detail the results of a preliminary bat roost assessment and subsequent three further emergence surveys. Bat droppings were found scattered within the roof void indicating that the roof void was being used by a long-eared bat species (*Plecotus* sp.), however no bats were observed emerging or entering the property during the subsequent surveys. The report however concludes that, because of the droppings, the proposals will impact upon a bat roost as such a licence for development works affecting bats will need to be obtained from Natural England.

Section 6 of the report includes a mitigation strategy to ensure that the favourable conservation status of bats can be maintained.

A condition should be set to ensure that the licence is obtained.

Trees - Due to the nature of the proposals, I am not concerned about direct harm to trees. In terms of site activity impacting trees, it would appear that there is sufficient hard surfacing at the front to accommodate storage etc, however ensuring that no activity spills onto the soft landscaping, to protect the RPAs of the TPO trees, would be prudent. In this case, I would simply suggest that a version of the Block plan or Ground Floor plan be provided allocating the soft landscape areas in the front gardens as 'construction exclusion zones' with the plan confirming that no development related activity will take place within those zones. This will avoid a pre-commencement condition for such a plan.

In the rear garden, the nearest tree is far enough away and I would not expect development related activity to affect this.

In conclusion, I have no objection subject to securing the simple plan for tree protection purposes, as detailed above.

External consultations:

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

25 Conisboro Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JB
26 Fernbrook Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7HG
24 Fernbrook Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7HG
19 Conisboro Avenue, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7JB

No comments received.

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)

SPG/SPD

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPG

6. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

Policy H9 states that an extension to a house will be acceptable where it respects the character of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design and respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design, and any important existing building line. Policy CC7 also sets out relevant considerations for design.

The proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of scale. The proposed porch is modest in size and the proposed new roof height is not considered excessive. Conisboro Avenue has a mixture of one and two storey homes, and therefore this proposal would not be considered harmful to the character of the property nor the street. The proposed new roof and gables and dormers are sympathetic to the character of the street and are considered acceptable in terms of design.

Residential Amenity

Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. Policy H10 seeks to ensure that the amenity of gardens and other outdoor areas are not compromised. Policy CC8 states an extension to a house will be acceptable where it will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

- Privacy and overlooking;
 - New windows are proposed at the first floor at the front and rear of the property. These are not considered to pose a risk of overlooking.
- Overbearing effects;
 - No identified risk.
- Sunlight and daylight;
 - No identified risk.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION

Recommended Conditions:

TL1

AP1

M3

L6

Bat license